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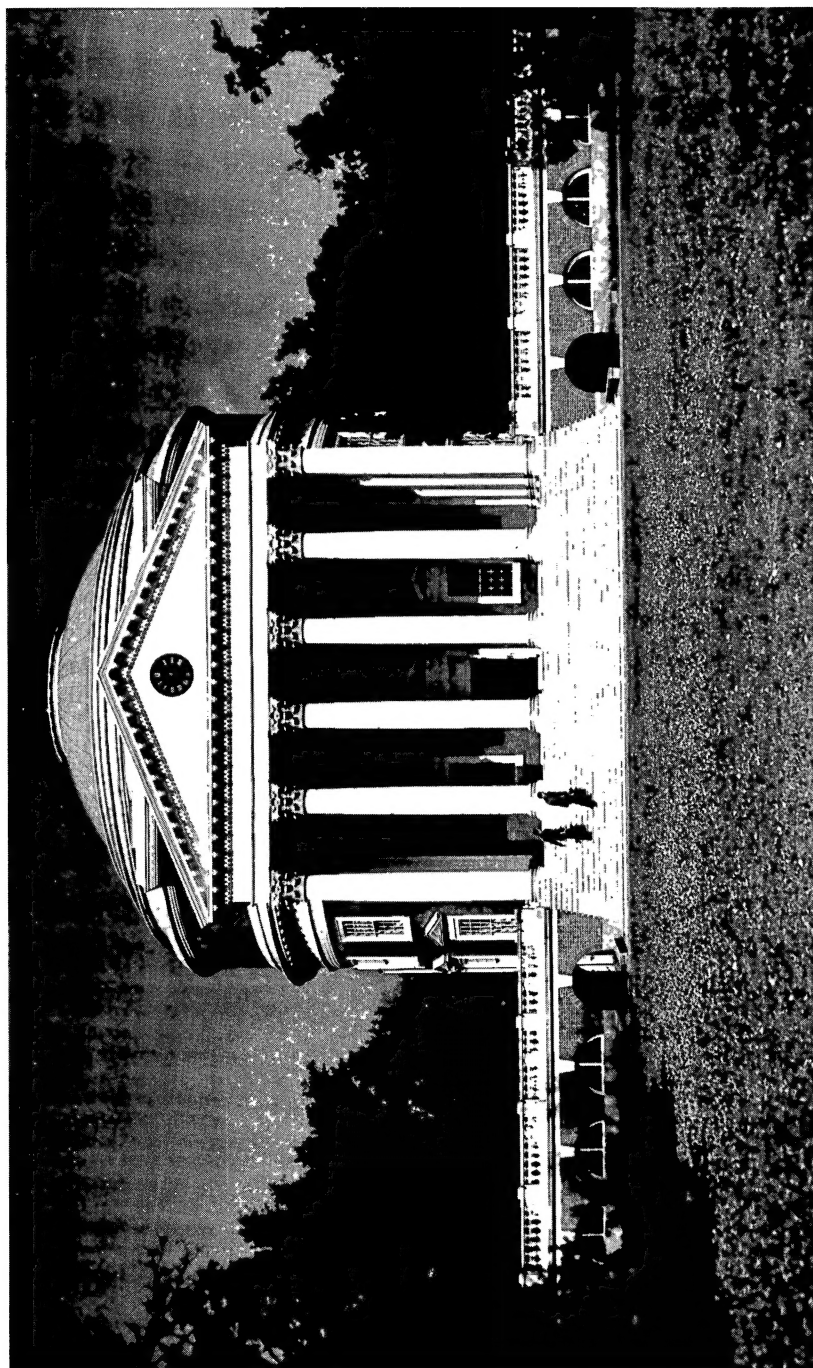
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A purpose of the Augusta County Historical Society is to publish *Augusta Historical Bulletin* to be sent without charge to all members. Single issues are available at \$1.00 per copy.

The membership of the society is composed of annual and life members who pay the following dues:

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|------------------------------|----------|
| Annual (individual) | \$5.00 |
| Annual (family) | \$8.00 |
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Rotunda of University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

ALBEMARLE COUNTY

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen:

This is an unusual privilege, for a person of one county to be welcomed in another county when the subject of his talk is his own county. Your gracious introduction, sir, has made me feel that I am a neighbor trying to become better acquainted with his neighbor across the mountain. I shall tell you about Albemarle County in the hope that some day you will reciprocate and send a representative to our people about Augusta County.

We both come from the same geologic background, from that ancient upheaval eons ago when the Appalachian Mountains were thrust up to a height of 20,000 feet. On our side of the crumbling Blue Ridge we weathered into rolling foothills, whereas on your side your land remained an upland valley. Until the early eighteenth century the country on either side of the ridge stretched eastward and westward in an unbroken wilderness. There was no general trail between the two areas until 1716 when Governor Spotswood and his intrepid knights of the Golden Horseshoe blazed a trail from the colonial capital at Williamsburg over the Blue Ridge at Swift Run Gap.

Our county was settled extensively by the white man ahead of yours, as adventurous homesteaders made their way up the Tidewater rivers, forcing the Monacan Indians over the mountain. The earliest settlers claimed only small areas for farms and trading stations, but by 1727 eastern Virginia landowners and their sons began patenting from the Crown large sections of the Piedmont country in western Goochland County. Between 1727 and 1731 the following among other patents were duly registered. 3100 acres by George Hoomes on the far side of the Chestnut Mountains (northern part of the Southwest Mountain Range); first 13,762 acres and later 4190 acres by Nicholas Meriwether on the near (eastern) side of the Chestnut Mountains; 2600 acres by George Nicholas on the James River, near what is now Warren; 400 acres by Allen Howard where the Rockfish River enters the James (present Howardsville); 2800 acres by Thomas Carr at the forks of the Rivanna River and up the North Fork; 2000 acres by Charles Hudson on both sides of the Hardware River; 9350 acres including the southern part of the Southwest Mountain Range by John Carter, Secretary of the Colony, and eldest son of Council President Robert ("King") Carter; 6400 acres by

Francis Eppes on the Hardware and Rockfish Rivers (the Green Mountain area); 1200 acres on Buck Island Creek by Charles Lewis, who married Mary Randolph, sister of Thomas Jefferson's mother; and a tract by Robert Lewis, of "Belvoir" (Keswick-Cismont area), who married Nicholas Meriwether's daughter, Jane, and later patented over 10,000 acres.

In 1734 there was an entirely different immigration into Albemarle County, when Michael Woods and his Wallace sons-in-law brought a group of Scotch-Irish settlers down the Shenandoah Valley and over the Blue Ridge at Woods Gap (now called Jarman's Gap). Woods patented 1300 acres on Lickinghole Creek and Mechum's River and later purchased 2000 acres on Ivy Creek from Charles Hudson. Eventually the Presbyterians from the western part of this region mingled with and married the Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists and Quakers who came up the rivers from eastern Virginia.

The two principal founders of Albemarle County did not arrive in this region until later, Peter Jefferson and Joshua Fry in 1744.

Tobacco soon became the chief cash crop, and Scott's Landing (now Scottsville) in western Goochland on the James became the principal river port.

The western part of Goochland was separated and constituted as Albemarle County by the Colonial Assembly by Act of September 4, 1744. It was named for the non-resident Royal Governor, William Anne Keppel, Second Earl of Albemarle.

Perhaps at this point a neighbor should answer another neighbor's rightful query, who are you and what is your pedigree?

I have mentioned that Albemarle County was carved out of Goochland County, as your county, Augusta, was derived from Orange County in 1745. Unfortunately for close kinship, Albemarle and Augusta must go back to the very early days of the Colony to find a close connection. In 1634 when Virginia stretched from Bermuda on the east and to the western sea the area that is now Virginia, West Virginia, and eastern Kentucky was divided into 8 "shires" and the rest of the land extending indefinitely westward into one "county". The shires were Accomack, Charles City, Charles River, Elizabeth City, Henrico, James City, Warrosquoake, and Warwick River; and the one county was Northumberland. From these original shires 56 counties were created, and 116 counties were derived from Northumberland County. Of these 172 counties 13 became extinct,

9 are presently in Kentucky, 50 in West Virginia, and the remaining 100 were in post Civil War Virginia (now reduced to 96). From Henrico County Goochland was formed in 1728 and Chesterfield in 1749. Out of Goochland came Albemarle in 1744 and Cumberland in 1749. When it was created in 1744 Albemarle County contained the region that now comprises most of Albemarle, Amherst, Nelson, Buckingham, Fluvanna, Appomattox, and a part of Campbell Counties. In 1761 Albemarle County lost all its land south of the James and west of the Rockfish River. It gained a portion of Louisa County north of the Rivanna River, and in 1877 it lost its eastern part that became Fluvanna County.

Parenthetically, Augusta was born of Orange in 1745, which was "sired" by Spotsylvania in 1734, which in turn was "begat" by Essex in 1721, Essex by (the first) Rappahannock in 1692, (old) Rappahannock by Lancaster in 1656, and Lancaster by the parent Northumberland in 1651.

Four months elapsed from its legislative creation before Albemarle County was formally established. On the 4th Thursday in February, 1745, the meeting for the purpose took place in the home occupied by the family of Edward Scott, near Scott's Landing on the James at its horseshoe bend. In 1732 Edward Scott, who was a Magistrate, Sheriff, and Burgess in lower Goochland County, patented 550 acres at the Horseshoe Bend of the James River, then called in this region the Fluvanna, and built a residence. By 1745 he had died (in 1738) and his widow and sons, Daniel and Samuel, were the hosts of the group who chose this site for the new county seat. The principal "architects" of the new county were Peter Jefferson and Joshua Fry. However, the other founders in this original group, Allen Howard, Dr. William Cabell, Joseph Thompson, and Peter Ballou (Bellew) were all important and interesting Goochland citizens. All six of these persons were named Magistrates. Joshua Fry became Lieutenant of the County, its highest ranking officer; he was also appointed Surveyor. Peter Jefferson was made Lieutenant Colonel of the militia and Assistant Surveyor. Allen Howard became Major, Dr. Cabell Captain, and Joseph Thompson Sheriff. Later William Randolph, of "Tuckahoe" was appointed County Clerk and Edmund Gray the King's Attorney. Within a few years an imposing Court House and a jail had been built, a ferry was crossing the "Fluvanna", an ordinary was in operation, and Magistrates were holding court regularly for the great domain then within Albemarle County.

Time will permit special and very brief comment on only three of these early leaders, Joshua Fry, Peter Jefferson, and Dr. William Cabell.

After being educated at Oxford, Joshua Fry had come to Virginia while he was still a young man. First he taught mathematics and natural science at William and Mary, but exploring soon caught his fancy. He went to Goochland, and before long he was County Surveyor, Colonel of the Goochland Militia, and Chief Magistrate. He was a man of commanding physique, broad intellectual interests and attainments, and of great courage. His adventurous spirit and personal charm made him a born leader. Soon after he came to western Goochland in 1744 he built a fine mansion called "Viewmont" on one of his patented tracts, a site on the Hardware River some ten miles north of Scott's Landing. He and Peter Jefferson made the first map of Albemarle County. When the French and Indian War came about in 1754 Fry was named Colonel of the regiment formed in Virginia. His second in command was young George Washington. Near Fort Willis (now Cumberland, Maryland) he was injured in a fall from his horse and the resultant fever brought about his untimely death. George Washington carved upon a tree near his grave there: "Under this oak lies the body of the good, the just, and the noble Fry".

Peter Jefferson came to Goochland from Chesterfield County. After becoming a Magistrate and the Sheriff of Goochland County he patented in 1737 a tract of 1000 acres extending between the present "Monticello" and Milton, and desiring a better house site he purchased from William Randolph, of "Tuckahoe" the four hundred acre "Shadwell" tract on which he built his home. His wife was Jane Randolph, daughter of Isham Randolph, of "Dungeness", and doubtless because of this kinship William Randolph charged only a bowl of "arrack punch" for "Shadwell". I have already spoken of Peter Jefferson's activities in the establishment of Albemarle County and of his close association with Joshua Fry. Their work as surveyors included the running of the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina. He also represented Albemarle County in the House of Burgesses. His illustrious son, Thomas (to be called throughout his life "Mr. Jefferson") was only 14 years old when Peter Jefferson died in 1757.

Dr. William Cabell was a man of many talents. He had been a Deputy Sheriff of Henrico, then Coroner and a Magistrate

of Goochland before he settled at "Warminster", just west of the confluence of the Rockfish with the James, in what is now Nelson County. He had the canny intelligence to verify the character and fertility of land tracts before procuring patents. At his river port at Warminster he established mills and mercantile establishments. He also operated a fleet of cargo barges between Warminster (named for his birthplace in England) and Westham, the Richmond port above the James River falls. All the while he actively practiced his profession as a physician in a wide area of Albemarle County. He died in 1774, aged 87.

In 1761 the axe fell. Albemarle County was dismembered by legislative acts. Its area south of the James became Buckingham County, and later (1845) a part of Buckingham went into the creation of Appomattox County. The western portion of the county beyond the Rockfish was named Amherst County, and out of this in 1808 Nelson County was established. This dismemberment left Albemarle with only the central and southern part of the present county and what is now Fluvanna County. To compensate somewhat for its losses Albemarle was given from Louisa County its present area north of the Rivanna River. Fluvanna County was cut off in 1777. You of Augusta can appreciate what feelings the leaders of Albemarle must have experienced when their far-flung territory was so drastically reduced in size, because you can recall that the original Augusta County embraced nearly all of the western and southwestern part of Virginia and a slice of West Virginia.

This 1761 situation posed for Albemarle County a confrontation with geography: its county seat was now not in its center but on its southern border. The solution of this problem was the chartering of a new county seat in the center of the newly consolidated area, the establishment of a town in the wilderness, cupped in a hilly valley lying between the Blue Ridge and the Southwest Mountain Range, with the Ragged Mountains as a southern barrier. By an Act of Assembly of December 23, 1762, Charlottesville was deliberately created and named for Queen Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, the young wife of the reigning British King, George III. Most county seats develop from an earlier settlement at some crossing of trails, or from a river port, but Charlottesville was arbitrarily laid out in a virgin valley. First, an acre square was chosen for the Court House and Jail, and then a rectangular area next to it was platted in 4 tiers of 7 squares each, 28 squares in all, each square con-

aining two numbered 1/2 acre lots. Thus, the original town covered 28 acres and was divided into 56 numbered lots. There were four streets running east and west, which still bear their original names, Jefferson (probably named after Peter Jefferson), Market, Main and Water; and there were six north and south streets, named—from east to west—Court (now 5th), Union (now 4th), School (now 3rd), Church (now 2nd), Green (now 1st), and Hill (now 2nd, west). Dr. Thomas Walker, of "Castle Hill", was appointed Trustee to sell the numbered lots.

Let this be enough of the history and development of the County. Let us now talk about some of the people and places which have contributed to the renown of Albemarle County.

In addition to the towering figures of its earliest days already mentioned, Fry, Jefferson, Cabell, etc., Albemarle County has had native sons and daughters who have achieved distinction in many fields, and many prominent persons have been led by its many aesthetic and cultural advantages to come to it for residence. Some of our greatest explorers have come from this County, such men as Dr. Thomas Walker, the first man to open trails into Kentucky, and Meriwether Lewis and William Clarke, who consolidated for President Jefferson the vast Louisiana Purchase by crossing the continent to the Pacific. General George Rogers Clark, a son of Albemarle, by his victories over the British at Kaskaskia and Vincennes secured for our new nation the so-called Northwest Territory, from which the states of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin were created. Captain Charles Lewis, of North Garden, and Dr. George Gilmer of Penn Park, led the Albemarle militia to Williamsburg in 1775 to scare the wits out of the Royal Governor-General, Lord Dunmore who attempted to remove the colonial stock of gunpowder from the town to ships in the harbor. The Albemarle County Declaration of Independence was signed by over 200 residents of the county.

As everyone knows, of course, Albemarle's most illustrious son to date was Thomas Jefferson, Peter Jefferson's elder son. The people of Albemarle County always refer to him as "Mr. Jefferson". Statesman, architect, horticulturalist, philosopher—few Americans have been so distinguished in so many fields. In the epitaph that he chose for his gravestone he made no mention of the great offices he had held, only that he was the author of the Declaration of Independence and of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom and was the Father of the University of Virginia.

Jefferson's portrait is one of three in the court room of the Albemarle County Court House. The other two are of James Madison and James Monroe. Perhaps no other Court House in America can claim three United States Presidents to have been intimately associated with it. Jefferson was a lawyer and a Magistrate, and this was his home court. Monroe, fifteen years younger than Jefferson, greatly admired him and moved his law office and residence from Fredericksburg to Charlottesville to be near him. He sat for a time as a Magistrate in the Albemarle Court House. Madison resided at "Montpelier" in Orange County, but he was a frequent visitor at our Court House, attending church services there, presiding there as President of the Albemarle County Agricultural Society, attending University of Virginia Board of Visitors meetings (he succeeded Jefferson as Rector), and various public gatherings. For the first quarter of the 19th century the Court House was the main meeting room for the county. Even political elections were held there.

James Monroe had successively three houses in Albemarle County. For his first two years here he lived at the "Stone House" on Market Street between Court and Union, then he bought a large farm adjoining the University of Virginia on the west and lived and had his law office on what is now called "Monroe Hill". All the while Jefferson was having built for him a mountain cabin some five miles east of "Monticello". He called it "Highland" (now called "Ash Lawn") and lived there off and on through his second term as President. As Governor of Virginia, Minister to France, England, and Spain, negotiating the Louisiana Purchase with Napoleon, as a cabinet officer, and as President he had little free time for occupying "Highland", but he gave it up (after 26 years of ownership) with great reluctance when he inherited and moved to "Oak Hill" in Loudoun County, following his second term as President. His daughter Eliza was married to John Hay at "Highland" in 1808.

An Albemarle hero of the Revolutionary Period was Jack Jouett, eponymous son of the proprietor of the Swan Tavern in Charlottesville. In 1781, just as Jefferson was retiring as Governor and Thomas Nelson, Jr. was succeeding him, the pressure of the British on Richmond (which Jefferson had made the capital in 1780) became so great that the Assembly adjourned on May 10 to meet in Charlottesville on May 24. While the Assembly was meeting in Charlottesville in early June the British Commander, Lord Cornwallis, dispatched his leading cavalry lieutenant,

Colonel Banastre Tarleton to hasten from the Richmond area to Charlottesville and attempt to capture the Assembly, including Jefferson, Patrick Henry, etc. Fortunately Jack Jouett was at a tavern at Cuckoo in Louisa County when Tarleton's troop rode by. Having a fine mare and knowing the country, Jouett took a cross country course, avoiding the roads, and reached Charlottesville ahead of Tarleton, in time for Jefferson, Henry, and Nelson and most of the others to escape. Among the few legislators who were captured was Daniel Boone, the delegate from one of the counties that are now in Kentucky.

Many other able and colorful persons have grown up in Albemarle County and in Charlottesville. Six Governors of Virginia have come from Albemarle: Jefferson, Monroe, Thomas Mann Randolph, Wilson Cary Nicholas, Thomas Walker Gilmer, and John S. Battle. Two Lieutenant- Governors: Shelton Leake and "Parson" Massey. Many residents of Albemarle have been Ambassadors: William Short (The Hague), Dabney Carr (Turkey), Hugh Nelson (The Hague), Thomas Jefferson (France), James Monroe (France, England and Spain), William C. Rives (France), Andrew Stevenson (England), Stanley Woodward (Canada), William C. Battle (Australia), and Charles F. Baldwin (Maylasia). It was Stevenson who presented an Albemarle Pippin to Queen Victoria, and saw this apple be the Court favorite throughout her reign.

Among those from this County who have served conspicuously in the political arena U. S. Senator Thomas S. Martin was certainly one of the foremost. In the Senate he had great influence as chairman of the Appropriations Committee; in Virginia he was the founder and director of the "Martin Machine", upon which the "Byrd Machine" later built its power structure.

Two poor boys, one from the County and one from Charlottesville, Samuel Miller and Paul Goodloe McIntire, left here as young men and returned years later with large fortunes. Each of them spent his fortune in benefiting his native heath. Miller established a manual labor school for poor children and contributed a school of agriculture to the University of Virginia. McIntire gave the City two parks, a library, four fine statues, as well as some very handsome benefactions to the University.

At least two ladies from Albemarle achieved great distinction. One of them, Nancy Langhorne Astor, daughter of Col. Chiswell Dabney Langhorne of "Mirador", became the first female member of the British House of Commons. The other,

Maud Woods, daughter of a well known Charlottesville lawyer, Micajah Woods, whose anonymous picture sponsored a Confederate Reunion in 1898, was selected in 1901 to represent North America on one side of the seal for the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. The beautiful actress, Maxine Elliott, graced the other side as the representative of South America. Thus, Charlottesville contributed the first "Miss America".

Albemarle County which was the playground of early Presidents, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, is still occasionally the recreational choice of Presidents. Theodore Roosevelt built and used a hunting lodge, "Pine Knot", near Scottsville; Franklin Roosevelt frequently spent week-ends at "Kenwood", the home of his military aide, General Edwin Watson; and Harry Truman was often the guest of his friend at "Colle".

Many of you, I know, are as much interested in places as you are in people, and like your lovely County ours has its share of fine and interesting residences. Most of you know our outstanding houses and farms, but at least some of the older ones ought to be mentioned in any talk on Albemarle County.

Our oldest house of quality that was standing in part until a few years ago was "Viewmont", which has already been mentioned as Joshua Fry's home in 1744.

Because the earliest settlers of the County came up the James and the North Anna Rivers and spread westward the first large houses were in the south and east sections. The original "Blenheim" on the John Carter grant was an early great house. Here Edward Carter, the Secretary's grandson lived a good life and served his County in the House of Burgesses. The brick house burned and was supplanted by a smaller frame house that was owned and occupied by Andrew Stevenson, the statesman I have already mentioned, and his talented wife, "Sallie" Coles. "Redlands", another Carter home, was built in 1798. The distinguished Coles family built several of their fine residences in the Green Mountain part of the County near the end of the eighteenth century, the original "Enniscorthy", "Old Woodville", and the original "Estouteville". Joseph Wright built "Chester", near Scott's Landing, possibly as early as 1747. "Cliffside", the present home of Virginia Moore, the author of "Scottsville on the James", also near Scottsville, was constructed by John Lewis, an early county banker, around 1785, and "Plain Dealing", where "Parson" Wilmer helped Robert E. Lee to decide his mission after The War, was built by the Staples and Dyer families between

1783 and 1787. "Bellair", near Carter's Bridge, was the house of Magistrate Charles Wingfield, Jr., in 1794. Over near North Garden the Scotsman, Andrew Hart, built "Sunny Bank" circa 1797; and a few years later Colonel James Powell Cocke who had exchanged "Malvern Hill", near Richmond, with Robert Nelson, for an upland malaria free tract at the southern end of the Green Mountain, had Thomas Jefferson design his home "Edgemont" for him. This lovely little house, now beautifully restored, is one of the architectural gems of this, or any other county.

You are all familiar, of course, with the building of Jefferson's "Monticello", so I need not take your time on this.

The eastern part of the County also had some early building. The Meriwethers, Lewises, and Randolphs saw to it that their large land grants were graced by substantial mansions, "Belvoir", the Robert Lewis residence, which was obliterated by fire, "Cloverfields", the Meriwether-Randolph property, and "Castle Hill", the home of Dr. Thomas Walker, who married the widow of Nicholas Meriwether, III, were all built before the Revolution. Another fine old place, "Keswick", to which Dr. Mann Page took his bride, Jane Frances Walker, had been erected by Dr. Walker and was given to his granddaughter as her dowry. Another old house, "Maxfield" which had been built in the "Belvoir" tract by Dr. Walker's son, John, around 1764, has had two moves, first to Milton in 1790, and later to its present location near Campbell Station. In the two rebuildings perhaps it gained charm. Nearer to Campbell Station there is an even older house, known as "Findowrie", on a tract patented by Thomas Darsie in 1733. A century later the house, which may have been built prior to 1750, was owned by Joseph Campbell, and today it is still owned by Campbell descendants, Mrs. Bartlett Bolling, Jr.

Northern and western Albemarle also contained some interesting pre-Revolutionary places. Among these are "Darby's Folly", a little house on the Garth Road, for a time called "Chestnut Ridge", originally a Garth family property, so named because the original builder commenced the construction between 1750 and 1760 but was unable to complete the structure. Another is "Spring Hill", near Ivy, which was the home of Andrew Wallace, who married Margaret Woods, one of the three daughters of Michael Woods, who crossed the Blue Ridge into Albemarle County, as I've already said, in 1734. A third was "Headquarters", in Brown's Cove, home of Captain Brightberry Brown. "Windie Knowe", near Eastham, is another, at least in its earlier part,

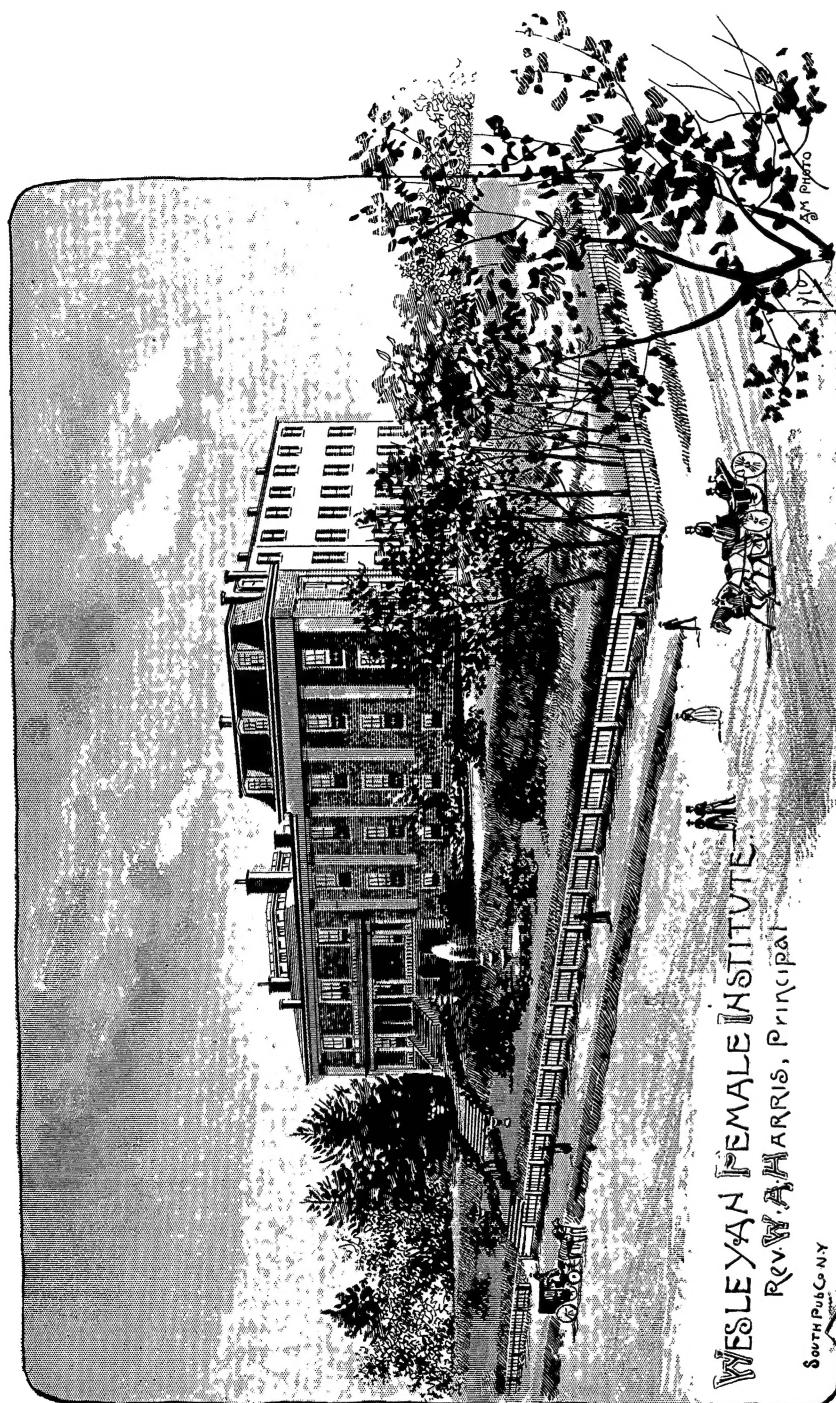
which is said to have been a hunting lodge built by an Englishman named Martin Key for "carousal" with English friends. Still another is your speaker's home, "Midmont", a David Lewis family place, just west of the University of Virginia, which is said to have been leased by British officers in 1777 when they were American prisoners, captured at the Battle of Saratoga. The old house at "The Farm", Col. Nicholas Lewis' residence, near the Rivanna River and now within the City of Charlottesville, had a surprise guest when Col. Banastre Tarleton chose to spend the night there when he raided Charlottesville in 1781.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am stopping here, for as a true son of Albemarle County I am full of my subject, and I have already tested your patience and tolerance too long. I have obviously enjoyed this address more than you have, but if I have made you, our near neighbors, a little more appreciative of Albemarle County I feel well rewarded.

Thank you.

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THE WESLEYAN FEMALE INSTITUTE

by Martha Peyton Hamrick

This work is a condensation of a Master's Thesis, prepared by the late Charles K. Brown for the Department of Education of the University of Virginia in 1936.

His references were the newspaper files of Staunton Weekly's located at the Court House in Staunton, records of the "Old" Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, various state statutes, and local court records. In this work, in some cases, quotes are used without reference, but can be found properly identified in his work, now in the archives of the Augusta County Historical Society.

Prior to the General Assembly's Act in 1846 which made possible a system of state primary schools, Staunton possessed an appreciable number of private elementary schools. In addition there were classical and Mathematics Schools for boys and a type of present-day "high school" for girls. Included among these were: Sally Harrison's School, across from the Harmon Hotel; the Children's Day School run by the Misses Douglass; Kalorama, a girls' school; Staunton Male Academy; English School for Boys; English Classical School; Bellevue Female School, A. D. Trotter's School; Pike Powers Classical and Mathematics School; Virginia Female Institute; Augusta Female Institute; Virginia School for Deaf and Blind; and Mrs. Bumgardner's and Mrs. Baskin's School.

Staunton in 1846 is vividly described by Waddell in his *Annals of Augusta County*. Staunton was shabby and unattractive, bleak and bare, with few trees, mud streets and no paved sidewalks. The square two-story court house stood where it does today, with the jail across the street. Augusta Street ended just after it crossed the creek, while Beverley Street on the east, ended at Gospel Hill (Beverley and Coalter) where the Winchester road came in over the hill. There were three churches, the Episcopal, where Trinity is today, the Presbyterian, to the right of what is now Old Main at Mary Baldwin, and the Methodist where Central now stands. It was said, that on a summer day, a man could look from Newtown (Beverley and Madison) to Gospel Hill and see no living creature, but the town did support two newspapers, the *Spectator* and the *Vindicator*.

With this brief background in mind, we approach the beginning of the Wesleyan Female Institute. The first mention of it is in a *Spectator* in early 1846 to the effect that "Rumor has it that the Methodists of the town are planning to start a Seminary." In the same paper on September 10, 1846, there was an announcement that the school had officially opened with the Rev. J. R. Finch as principal. Classes for the thirty day students were held at first "in the basement of the old Methodist Church." A fund of \$2000.00 was subscribed to support the project. There were some out-of-town students who were boarded in private homes. Classes for these girls were held in the castle-like frame building on Main Street, called the Chandler Building.

From its inception the school became a church institution under the control of the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Formal request for Conference direction was made at the March Session of 1847. Conference granted this request and named eight trustees. The first board was organized on May 9, 1849 and the Virginia General Assembly granted a charter the same year. The board resolved to erect a new building on a lot with frontage of 130 feet on the north side of Beverley and extending back 172 feet, bounded on the east by the lot of George Hisler and the west by Kitty Harouff. Capt. John F. Smith was elected architect. The Masonic fraternity laid the cornerstone in May 1850 and the building was erected with money borrowed from the Pensioners Fund of the Baltimore Conference.

A partial list of the personal property as recorded in the deed of trust is interesting.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 26 bedsteads, with beds and bedding | 300 yards carpeting |
| 2 rosewood sofas | 75 yards floor oilcloth |
| 2 pianos | 7 dozen chairs |
| 10 stoves | 12 tables |
| 20 walnut desks | 70 iron frame chairs |
| 36 transparent blinds | 4 Venetian Blinds |
| 4 wardrobes | 3 outline maps |
| 1 dinner and tea service for 60 | 16 looking glasses |
| Philosophical apparatus | 6 settees |
| wash stands | Chamber Sets |

The rates were \$50.00 tuition for a 5 month session, rent was \$1.50 and board was \$40.00.

The scholastic year of 1854-55 was a quiet one at Wesleyan Female Institute. The Rev. John Wilson was serving as principal of the school. From available news sources, only facts as to the stimulation of feminine gaiety and charm, brought about by the arrival of spring; the excellent and growing reputation of Staunton as a center of seminaries for young ladies; agitation throughout the state for the removal of the capitol from Richmond, and an account of the annual closing exercises of W.F.I. are revealed. The news of the controversy over the removal of the state capitol is significant, for it led in a few years to plans for its relocation in Staunton.

"On September 22, 1855, the *Vindicator* called attention to the fact that the Lynchburg *Republican* had advised the removal of the Virginia Capitol from Richmond 'to some more healthy and central position' and had suggested that Lynchburg was the place. The *Vindicator* averred that it was not decidedly in favor of any removal, but if such should occur, Staunton was the logical and desirable location.

"From its central position—the greatest facility of reaching it—its growing importance as a city of commerce—the largeness of any of its inhabitants and the general reputation of the people and the city all combine in its favor with a force of argument impossible to resist.

The whiskey distilled here would be an added attraction; and any legislative members who indulged in 'mad ranting' on certain subjects would be treated first hand by Dr. Stribling! Can Lynchburg offer as favorable inducement? We opine not."

More interesting still is the fact that W.F.I. was soon to occupy quarters on the commodious site which was chosen originally for the new capitol.

In 1856 there was only one graduate, a Miss Martin of Baltimore. The first crowning of a W.F.I. May Queen was also held and was described as being "the most attractive and successful May Queen exercises witnessed in Staunton in many years." In contrast to most May Queen exercises, this one was held indoors and at night. Miss Maggie E. Pilcher of Richmond was crowned as Queen.

In 1858, Rev. Benjamin Arbogast succeeded Rev. Wilson as Principal. Prior to this announcement in the *Spectator and General Advertiser*, the new principal had given to the editor a catalogue of the institution. Three additional facts are ascertained from an advertisement in the paper of August 10, 1858; the

claim that WFI possessed a higher standard of scholarship, and that board and tuition was cheaper than at institutions of similar grade (\$85.00 in the preparatory department and \$95.00 in the Collegiate, without inclusion of extra charges as music, art, and modern languages); second, the old Baltimore Conference had been divided into two areas—the Baltimore Conference and the Baltimore East Conference; third, a “recent handsome donation” had relieved the Institute from all financial embarrassment.

Bitter disagreements between the states of the North and the South and talk of a probable war disengaged the usual smooth management of WFI in 1860. Principal Arbogast retired and the Rev. J. A. McCauley was elected his successor. For some unknown reason, however, Mr. McCauley did not accept the appointment, and the Baltimore Conference named the Rev. William A. Baird to fill the place. He accepted the position. Enrollment was down this year and an appeal was made for support. “To our own conference people, we say here is *your* school. Will you make it the best in the State—an institution which the whole Church will be proud of? Or will you let it languish for the want of the patronage you are sending elsewhere? We call upon *You* to rally to your church school. We challenge any school of a similar grade in the land to present a better standard of graduation than Wesleyan Female Institute.

Throughout the period of the War Between the States, there is little information of the school, partially due to the fact that the papers were filled with news of the war. In 1861, the Baltimore Conference met in Staunton and Boards of Visitors and Trustees were appointed. Also a sum of \$13.30 was reported to the Conference as on hand for educational purposes, which was ordered to be paid to WFI.

During 1862, the school was in dire circumstances, and many of the conference institutions were forced to close. The Conference meeting in Harrisonburg, unanimously adopted two resolutions; first, “That the Wesleyan Female Institute is worth of our confidence, and that we will use our influence and best exertions to secure for it a more extended patronage.” and second, “That whenever practicable we will solicit donations and take up collections for the benefit of the school.”

The Rev. P. B. Smith who introduced these resolutions made an urgent appeal for the support of the conference school. He stated that it was the only institution of learning at present under the patronage and direction of the conference; that many other

schools of similar character had been forced to close on account of the war; that W.F.I. had “nobly struggled against all difficulties and is in successful operation” that the school was not patronized to the extent its merits demanded, and its abilities justified; that its educational course was “substantial and classical”; that “commendable zeal and efficiency” characterized its management; and that both Principal Baird and his wife were manifesting every interest and effort to provide thorough personal care and training for the best advantages of their pupils.

Some of the materials of instruction possessed by the school during the war period are mentioned in the *Vindicator* in 1863. Included were a large library, “philosophical and Chemical Apparatus, Globes, Maps, Anatomical Charts, a Cabinet of Minerals, and a well preserved skeleton, with prepared muscles, veins, arteries, etc.” Also mentioned in this article was the discipline of the school. The government was of the “parental” type, “combining order and firmness with kindness and forbearance.”

Attendance was termed satisfactory in 1864. Other than this, there is little else reported. In 1865, with the end of the war, the following advertisement in the *Vindicator* announced that during the “whole period of the terrible war, this Institution has been in operation . . . and in the midst of unprecedented difficulties, has nobly and successfully sustained itself. And now that Peace once more smiles upon our land, and invites to fields of profit and progress, the Officers of this School will spare no labor, and avoid no necessary expense, that will tend to the physical comfort, and social and mental improvement of its pupils.”

In 1866, the Rev. William A. Harris was appointed Principal following the resignation of Mr. Baird. Mr. Harris was to lead WFI to its greatest heights. His contract called for him to be paid 2/3 of the gross profits, with all bad debts to come from his share. In this year, there were eight major departments of learning in the school; ancient and modern languages, mathematics, philosophy, astronomy, chemistry, music, drawing, and painting. There were seven instructors.

In 1867, the Staunton Lyceum was founded, and faculty members of Wesleyan Female Institute contributed their time and talents toward its successful conduct. A musical association was also formed with a glee club a part of it, all of which were guided by Professor J. H. Hewitt, head of the department of music of W.F.I. Public debates were held by the Lyceum, with some rather humorous topics (or so it seems to us); “Is the mind

of woman naturally equal to that of man?"; "Is the use of vinous or spiritous liquors except for medicinal purposes immoral?"; "Is falsehood, by word or act, ever justifiable?"; "When universal suffrage is granted to males, should it be extended also to females?"; "Is the right of suffrage a natural right under a Republican government?" Some of the topics were more serious; "Is a general free school system desirable for Virginia?" or "Should the government prohibit the transportation and distribution of the mails on Sunday?"

At W.F.I., the courses were organized into five schools for the first time in the school's history: the school of natural philosophy; the school of chemistry; the school of English literature; the school of French and the school of Latin. There were nine faculty members, of which two were women. There was also a woman in the position of "Matron of the family." This is significant of the extreme care and caution the school was exerting to provide a home-like atmosphere for the students. It is interesting also to note that in 1867, for the first time, dancing was taught at the Methodist institution.

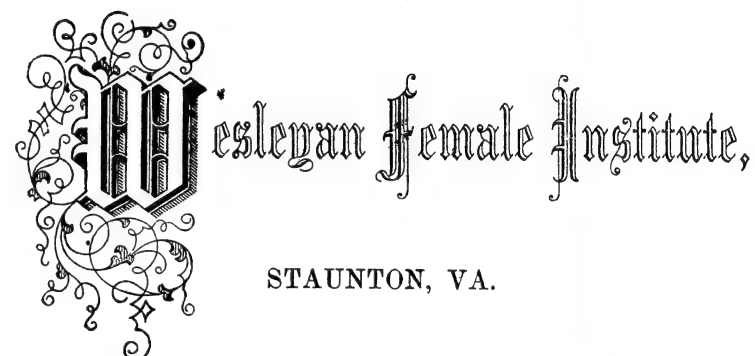
In 1868, the enrollment was 100, with 60 from out-of-town. On May 5, about one o'clock in the morning, students at W.F.I. were terrified by a street brawl near the school between about twelve young members of the Ku Klux Klan and a regularly armed and organized group of Negroes numbering about forty. The KKK was "mounted and wearing the distinctive garb of the mysterious terror group." The Negroes launched the attack which lasted for fifteen minutes when the KKK was forced to flee for lack of numbers. Fortunately no one was injured, although "a score of well-aimed muskets and pistols were shot at the ghostly disturbers of the peace." One of the Klan members was "cut off from his confrères but by superior horsemanship and cool courage, he managed to escape untouched—clearly proving he was ball-proof." After criticizing the local law enforcement officers for allowing such a disgraceful breach of law and order to occur, the editor said of the W.F.I. students that although they were in a state of great consternation, "it is our belief that if they had turned out *en masse* with scissors and bodkins, they could have dispersed the whole gang of rioters."

In this year at W.F.I., examinations assumed a new character. There were two series, one written to be held before the faculty, and the oral to be conducted by the Conference Committee for the school. An advertisement in the fall of 1868 stated

that the "System of Teaching" existing at Wesleyan Female Institute was "like that pursued in the University of Virginia." In this year the first B.A. Degree was awarded by the school. Also a slight advance in rates was announced with a differentiated schedule for boarding and day students. For the former, board and tuition in the Collegiate course, with ancient languages, was to be \$215.00 for the full scholastic year; must was to cost \$50.00 and French or one modern language, \$20.00. For day students the rate was \$60.00. All charges were "payable in currency, one half in advance."

CATALOGUE

OF THE



Twenty-First Annual Session, 1869-'70.

College of the Baltimore Conference, Episcopal Methodist Church, South.

In 1869 students represented the following states: Georgia, Alabama, Virginia, Maryland, Louisiana, West Virginia, Mississippi, and Florida. There were 77 boarding and 32 day pupils in the school. The number of distinct "schools" in the Collegiate course had risen to ten: Mathematics, embracing arithmetic, algebra, plane geometry, trigonometry, and conic sections; natural philosophy, including mechanics of solids, liquids and gasses, astronomy and geology, phenonoma of heat, electricity, light and atmosphere; chemistry, English Literature; Latin; French; moral philosophy; history; music; and anatomy, physiology and hy-

giene. There were three sets of examinations; daily, which were oral and administered by the instructor; intermediate, which were written and conducted by the faculty; and the final, which were oral and written and given by the faculty and a committee appointed by the Conference.

It is said that when the young ladies of the school went walking in the town, they were accompanied by one or more of the male instructors each of whom carried a cane. Mischievous boys used to offer their amorous verbalisms as the students walked here and there, and many youngsters received a vigorous blow from the canes of the professors. No such rude behavior was to be allowed, when the dignity and decorum due a young lady of the 1860's, formed a supreme objective of feminine training and education.

For the promotion of literary interests among themselves, the students formed the Lee and Jackson Literary Society. They also formed a Young Ladies Christian Association. Along this line, three types of religious exercises were observed at the school. The program for each day began and ended with "Divine Worship, reading the Scriptures, occasional comment; hymn by the school and prayer." Twice each week the whole school engaged in a Bible Exercise. Finally, on the Sabbath, pupils were required to attend a worship service regularly, whenever the weather was favorable.

What were the clothes like that the young ladies wore? The school catalogue for 1869-70, the earliest still available, gives us an idea. They were required to wear a uniform whenever they walked outside the limits of the school, to avoid "extravagance and unpleasant distinctions of dress." For this purpose, two walking suits were used, one for fall and winter, the other for spring and summer. The former had to be made of "drab empress cloth, with wrapping of the same shade of the dress, either of the same material or heavier; the latter was to be of "White Pique."

The daily schedule was long but interesting. In 1869, a student arose at 6 o'clock and breakfasted at 7 following prayers at 6:30. From 7:30 to 8:15 the students walked, and following divine services, writing exercises took up from 6:30 to 9 o'clock when recitations began. With time out for dinner at 12:30, these continued until 3 PM. After this, time was allotted for recreation or study as the student might desire, except for a few special classes. Tea was served at 6:30 with prayer following at 7:00. A half hour recreation period ended at eight with a study period

lasting until 9:30 when preparations for bed began, with lights and fires out at 10 PM. The house matron checked beds and fires. The catalogue states that modifications were made for the short winter days.

Among general regulations the following were noticed:

"The Correspondence of Pupils must be such as to meet the approval of Parents and Guardians."

"All Attentions of Visits from Young Gentlemen, without written Authority from Parent or Guardian are prohibited."

"Pupils are required to take exercises by daily walks with the Governess."

"Hereafter, no pupil will be allowed to expend money or contract any debts without the advice of Principal and the consent of her Parent or Guardian."

"A Musical Rehearsal will be monthly by the Music Class, before the faculty and a few invited guests."

"Parents are earnestly requested not to remit any money to their daughters by mail."

"Pupils are charged for the entire Scholastic year without a special contract to the contrary."

"Deductions are made only for absence on account of protracted illness."

"Official Reports of the progress of the pupils will be sent regularly to Parents or Guardians."

"Each Boarder will furnish one pair of sheets, pillow-cases and towels."

One of the significant events in the history of Wesleyan Female Institute occurred in the summer of 1870. The school purchased for \$25,000.00 the John Cochran house and lot of some three acres. This was on top of Johnson Street hill, on the south side, between Madison Place and Fayette Street. The Cochran house is still standing, being the one now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Carter Loth. The next-door house, owned by Dr. and Mrs. Carl Broman was built in 1871 and was originally joined to the Cochran house. This expansion gave a total of 48 rooms. The Beverley Street building was rented to the Baptist Institute for \$1000 a year.

Also in 1870, "a terrible freshet causing immense destruction of property" fell on Staunton in September and interfered in a material way with operation of W.F.I. Total damage to the town was placed at \$20,000. Not only Staunton was damaged

as flooding was general throughout the Valley and in the Southwest and Southeast portions of the state. For eight days no trains came into the city and telegraph communication was disrupted. Activities of W.F.I. were curtailed and the matter of securing food and supplies became an item of major importance.

In 1871 the two new buildings on the new site were completed. The school was in rather good financial shape. There were 106 out-of-state pupils with 17 from Texas. The 1872 graduations featured two baccalaureate addresses, one a sermon, and the other an address. There were four "full" graduates from the school.

During the year, the great Methodist revivalist, Rev. Leonidas Rosser visited Staunton in December. The students at WFI were greatly influenced by the personal magnetism and brilliant sermons of this minister of the gospel and about one hundred of the girls regularly attended the services. Special seats were reserved for the group "who marched into the section reserved for them."

1874 was a distressing year for the Trustees of Wesleyan Female Institute. First, a suit was instituted in the circuit court of Augusta County in an effort by members of the Northern Methodist Church, or simply the Methodist Episcopal Church, to secure possessions of the Staunton Methodist Church. The second disturbing event was an effort begun by the Preachers Aid Society of Baltimore, to collect a loan made by the society to the Trustees of Wesleyan Female Institute when the first building of the school was built in 1850. The society desired payment of both principal and interest accrued and asserted that the total amount was secured by mortgage on the school's original property. As both of these actions went back to the separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church into northern and southern bodies in 1856, the Conference studied the situation and rejected the efforts to collect the debt, saying that preachers, widows and orphans of the conference entitled as beneficiaries to a share in the fund had never received their justly deserving benefits from the fund.

Another reference to W.F.I. at that Conference was made when Mr. Harris, the principal, stated in his report that the clergy and laity of the Conference were not supporting the school as they should in that "the distant state of Texas sends as many as the entire number from our Conference bounds."

The appearance of a new type of cantata, "The Miracles of the Roses"; the continuation of the custom of holding occasional

soirées of a musical nature; and renewed and intensive efforts for additional facilities for the school in a new dorm wing and chapel were three of the main events of 1874. The usual report of continued prosperity was given by Mr. Harris and by a Moses Walton, Esq., who affirmed that such matters were "in a healthy condition."

In 1875 the old WFI building was sold. The *Vindicator* reports: "the old building on Main St., now occupied by the public schools, was sold at auction for \$7,375 by E. M. Cushing; the purchasers being the Rev. W. A. Harris, President of the Institute and Major B. T. Bagby. The sale was under a decree of the U.S. District Court, in the suit of the Preachers' Aid Society vs. Wesleyan Female Institute." Thus the Society exercised its mortgage rights upon the property, in order to collect a loan of about \$5000 made in the earliest years of the Institute.

A new award was made at the annual exercises of the Young Ladies Christian Association. This was the "distribution of sixty-two gold stars to young ladies for the neatness in their rooms, and the awarding of three miniature gold dust pans to pupils who took the neatness star the last year." At the annual soirée a rather unusual thing occurred. The suggestion was made that a collection be taken to finance two fountains on the school grounds. As "A collection at a soirée was a new thing, and when Dr. Deems announced it, the audience who had embarked for a happy musical voyage, were panic-stricken at the thought of being wrecked on the shoals of a collection; and some leaped overboard and made for home, but those who remained soon recovered their equanimity, and the spirit shown gives the hope that the beautiful lawn of the female college will soon be adorned with two beautiful fountains."

Enrollment was down in 1876, and the Baltimore Conference expressed concern at the somewhat precarious financial situation of the school. At the Commencement of that year, 130 gold medals and awards were given for such things as penmanship proficiency, excellence in drawing, and "distinguished in assiduous fidelity in practicing" on the piano. A listing of the curriculum was also made: "Orthography, English Grammar, English Composition, History of the United States, History of England, History of Rome, History of France, History of Greece, Junior Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Algebra, Philosophy, Primary, Junior Intermediate and Senior French, Intermediate and Senior German, Intermed-

iate Latin, Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Drawing and Oil Painting."

In the comments of the Trustees in a report given to the Conference in 1877, we find that the Institute had *at no time* a source of revenue except from operative activities. No collections had been taken nor had any aid been given by the Baltimore Conference. The debt of the school was fixed at about \$27,000, with hopes of being completely in the black in eight years. The estimate of the property value of the school was \$49,000. An agent was appointed for the Institute, a Rev. John Landstreet, and he was to collect moneys for the school for the liquidation of the debt, but with several inhibiting conditions: he could not interfere with the collections for the support of preachers or any other Conference collection; he could not take up any collections from any Congregations within Conference bounds; and his expenses and compensation were in no way chargeable to the school.

In 1878, a course in calisthenics was added to the curriculum. Also, the city of Staunton purchased the old building on Beverley Street for \$5500, which was to be paid for "in 6 per cent bonds, running for 30 years." It was stated that the city had been renting the building for several years for the sum of \$600.00 annually. In the financial arrangement of the school, a change was made in the provision that minister's daughters should not be charged room and tuition, until such time as the indebtedness of the school was eliminated.

Conference was urged in 1879 to support the school. "It is proper to mention that this School is our Conference School in an emphatic sense, and while encouraging all the schools under our care, (one of which was Randolph Macon College) let us be aroused to the important fact that our best efforts should be given to the Wesleyan Female Institute."

Of great importance was the trip taken by fifty or sixty girls to Washington, where they went sight-seeing and called on President Hayes, who received them cordially—and kissed them all.

There was a new four story addition to the school, large enough to provide housing for 30 girls and a calisthenics hall, an art gallery, two lecture and music rooms. The school plant was expanding.

In 1880, the litigation between the school and the Preachers Aid Society was finally settled. "Owing to the general financial depression, the last Scholastic year was one of the most depressing

and discouraging in the history of the School, yet we are pleased to report that the School was not only self-sustaining, but also declared a dividend last June, in its favor, of \$3082.82." It was explained that this amount was applied to meet claims of the Preachers Aid Society, and that every claim against the Institute was fully met and settled.

In 1881, the Institute's trustees made a request to the Conference that the educational fund collection be equally divided between Wesleyan Female Institute and Randolph-Macon College. The request created quite a bit of discussion but it was tabled indefinitely. Several facts relating to the school buildings give a picture of accommodations. The buildings were "all of brick and covered with metal. The Halls for Dining, for Lectures, Recitations, Music, Divine Worship and all rooms occupied by pupils are under one connected roof so that pupils in passings from one to another are never exposed to inclement weather. Not more than four Pupils are assigned to a room, each of which is provided with new and comfortable furniture with an abundance of fuel and fire in cool or cold weather. For safety and health, the pupils' rooms are not more than two stories above the basement. . . . The grounds occupy an entire square of several acres and embrace the same imposing and beautiful site on which was once contemplated the erection of the Capitol of Virginia. They are richly adorned and beautified by walks, evergreens, flowers, trees and groves, affording a most delightful retreat for sportive exercise and healthful recreation." The education given at Wesleyan Female Institute was based on four basic departments: physical, intellectual, social, and religious.

1882 was a rather important year in two facets. First, the trustees of W.F.I. were authorized to issue bonds to fund the debt. They were secured on a property value of \$60,000. Also, the Conference divided the educational collection between Randolph-Macon and Wesleyan Female, the former getting \$4000 and the latter receiving \$3000. With the apparent decision of the Conference this year that it should have two colleges within its bounds, one for men and the other for women, it is rather interesting to note the subsequent decline of Wesleyan Female Institute and the birth in 1891 and opening in 1893 of Randolph Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, a second school in the Randolph-Macon system.

In 1883 the school was closed temporarily due to Scarlet Fever. The financial situation was reported to have improved,

with profits of \$3000 being realized. In 1884, a deed of trust, was filed in Staunton Corporation Court which provided for the borrowing of money and the securing of the loan authorized by the General Assembly in 1882. Bonds were to be issued of the coupon type, numbering 250 in the denomination of \$100 each. The sum borrowed was \$25,000, the rate of interest, 6% payable semi-annually and the money was secured from the Augusta National Bank. The bonds were redeemable at the end of three years from their date at the option of the trustees. Indebtedness was to be absorbed by the net revenues of the Institute from year to year, including, of course, both interest and principal. In case of default in payments of either principal or interest, provision was made for the sale of the Institute, including all realty and personal property. Half of the bonds were sold to Principal Harris and half to the Cochran Estate.

In 1885, the trustees decreed that any profits made at W.F.I. were to be directed to the liquidation of debts except for money needed for repairs. Principal Harris and the trustees entered into a new contract this year. Instead of the 50-50 split of revenues, the division was 60% for the trustees and 40% for Principal Harris, with all bad debts to come from his 40%.

There is mention of the system of government. "The deportment of pupils was estimated on a scale of merit from 1 to 100. 1 indicating the minimum of merit and 100 the maximum or perfection in conduct. When a young lady enters the Institute, she is credited with 100 in conduct. Subsequently, every offence against law and order, according to its grade, takes from 1 to 10 demerits from that number." A periodic report of the students deportment was sent home.

Dress codes had also been modified. For fall and winter, the girls had to wear a plain black dress with a wrapping of the same color. White lawn was the word for spring and summer. For daily use, the students could wear any dress that they wore at home. Fall uniforms had to be ready by October 15 and the spring by May 1. Under general regulations, we find that each boarding student had to provide a pair of sheets, towels, pillowcases, a pair of blankets, a white spread and a knife, fork and spoon. It was also suggested that each pupil furnish an umbrella, gum shoes and a water-proof. A medical charge of \$5.00 was also made.

In 1887 the argument whether or not the citizens of Staunton considered W.F.I. an asset gained headway at Conference. A

number of trustees, when asked this question, replied "They wouldn't have the school close for anything. If it were not for the schools and the insane asylum, I don't know what the town would do." A debate also arose over the real ownership of the school, but the fundamental issue was a difference of opinion in the financial management. Conference wanted all revenues applied to the debt, but Dr. Harris wanted to expand and improve the school also. Finally, Dr. Harris secured a lease on the school for 12 years. He was to have the entire control of the management of the college, and he was determined to enlarge its facilities.

Mischievous boys continued to plague all the women's colleges in Staunton. Council finally took action at the request of Mr. Tams, one of the councilmen. It seems that several days before some boys had climbed the fence of one of the schools. Also they followed the girls when they went for walks and annoyed them with improper remarks. Some even went on the grounds of the schools and tried to converse with the students that were outside. Council passed the following resolution:

"Be it ordained by the Common Council of the City of Staunton, that no person under pretext of exercising the right to be on the public streets, shall loiter near the premises of said institutions for the purpose of prying with any of the inmates thereof; nor shall any one accompany or follow the pupils of said institutions on the public streets without the permission of the teachers in charge of said pupils. Any person guilty of the offense or offenses herein mentioned, after being duly convicted thereof, shall be fined not less than \$1.00 nor more than \$10.00 for each offense. It shall be the duty of the City Police to see that this ordinance is strictly enforced." (This seems amusing, especially in the light of the young men, both of the City and SMA and AMA who swarm the streets and grounds of Stuart Hall and may be seen with girls downtown and the young men on the Mary Baldwin College Campus.)

In 1888 the terms of the lease were outlined. Dr. Harris rented the school for \$3200 per year for a period of five years. Conference specified that the funds were to be used to reduce the debt, with not over \$300 per annum to be used for repairs or improvements. The business school, begun in 1881, when book-keeping was added to the curriculum, continued to grow, with the addition of stenography and typewriting in 1889.

During 1890, some sixty of the students again went on a field trip to Washington. After sightseeing and paying a call on President Harrison, the suggestion was made that a dance should be held in their honor. An orchestra was obtained and the girls were looking forward to the event, but the chaperone-teachers spoiled everything by decreeing that the girls should not be permitted to dance with the gentlemen. Therefore, their only alternative was to dance with each other or be wallflowers. 1890 also marks the first B.S. Degree being awarded and the *Vindicator* article indicates that the commercial school was growing with banking, commercial arithmetic, and telegraphy being added this year.

In 1891 the financial cracks finally broke into the open. Dr. Harris invested some of his private resources in improvements for the school. The *Valley Virginian* closed an article on the school with the statement, "The time has come when the Conference should take some decisive action in regard to the school, for in this progressive age it cannot be expected to compete with other colleges which possess the import and facilities which it lacks."

The Conference, in 1892, agreed to allow a chapel and infirmary to be built. Almost as an omen, the home of a faculty member burned early in 1893 and this year proved to be a bad one for the school. Dr. Harris resigned as President of Wesleyan Female Institute after heading the school for 27 years, to move to Roanoke and start a school there. Professor Walter M. Robertson, former superintendent of the Staunton schools, succeeded him in March. This year the trustees of Wesleyan Female and Randolph-Macon Colleges were the one and the same and also this year, is the beginning of Randolph-Macon Woman's College, under Dr. William Waugh Smith who was president of Randolph-Macon College. It also had the same board, as it was founded as part of the Randolph-Macon System of schools.

In 1894, the bonded debt of the school was long overdue, but the interest had been paid in full to date. Professor Robertson built a new wing, added steam heat, and increased the debt from \$23,000 to \$35,000. The citizens of Staunton subscribed \$10,500 to help keep the school open, provided the Conference raised \$15,000, which it didn't. This money was again to come from a split with R-MC, which was to receive \$45,000 and W.F.I. the \$15,000.

Reeves Catt was appointed trustee and was given the power to run the school, secure instructors, and pay off the debt in 1895. The sale of a \$30,000 bond was authorized. The William Knabe Company brought suit against the school and subsequently other petitions were filed in Hustings court. President Robertson resigned and the Rev. H. P. Hamill succeeded him.

The decline of the school continued in 1896. The Baltimore Conference decided upon a \$10,000 joint stock company to help relieve the financial pressure on the school. Staunton citizens subscribed an additional \$5,000 for the school. Then the deed of trust issued to the trustees and by which Reeves Catt ran the school was declared null and void and a fraud per se by the Virginia Supreme Court.

The *Spectator and General Advertiser* noted in 1897 the entering of a decree in Hustings court for the sale of certain personal property of the school, including pianos. The debt had increased to \$40,000 and Conference heard two recommendations on underwriting the debt of the school. First, a collection was to be taken in the meeting, and, second, that if any indebtedness remained after this collection and the amount from the sale of personal property, the preachers were asked to appeal to their congregations to raise as large an amount as possible.

In 1899, creditors failed in an attempt to enforce collection of notes given in 1893 to assist the school in its financial crisis. Conference also failed to raise \$2500 to repay three trustees who had advanced their own money for the school.

In 1900, the grounds and buildings were sold to Mrs. Fannie L. Partlow for \$9,500, a far cry from the original \$25,000, which purchased the house and lot in 1870, without the many improvements made during the subsequent 30 years.

A final mention of the school is made in 1901 when the daughter of Dr. Harris, now deceased, attempted to collect \$7,642.29 from the Conference, claiming the amount was due her Father's Estate. Conference decided, "We report that it is the sense of this Board, that the Baltimore Annual Conference is not under either legal or moral obligations to the estate of Dr. William A. Harris."

Summed up, President Harris was a builder, a progressive educator, but not a conservator-type of administrator. This led to disagreements between him and the Conference. Under his leadership, the school rose to its heights and started to its end.

The percentage method of paying him left room for argument and undoubtedly led to the final end.

It must also be remembered that his period in the history of our country and of this area was one of tremendous growth in population, area and industrialization. The economy had great booms and great panics. The collapse of the Staunton Development Company and other land speculations in this area in 1894-1896 may well have played a part in the ultimate downfall also. Perhaps the founding of Randolph-Macon Woman's College was a part with Conference switching more support to it. No one today can say, for it a combination of poor management, poor support, and changing times.

All that can be certain is that the Wesleyan Female Institute filled a tremendous need in the education of Southern young ladies for fifty years and considerably heightened the cultural and educational development of Staunton and Augusta County.

THE STORY BEHIND THE STONE

by James Sprunt

The fifteen year old Augusta County freshman at Washington College went to the chalk board in math class to work out a problem. While he was so engaged the President of the College dropped in for a few minutes as an observer. The student worked carefully through the problem to a correct solution. As he took his seat the President stood up to leave, and as he did so he said to the surprised freshman, "Well done, Mister McCue!" William McCue was quite overcome, but later he could not recall whether he was happier over being thus approved for his work or being called "Mister" by their beloved President, General Robert E. Lee. One of the treasures in his old home, where his daughter now lives at Fort Defiance, is a report card of a term in 1866 from the then Washington College showing the excellence of William McCue in math and other studies, and bearing the signature "R. E. Lee".

William McCue's painstaking accuracy in that classroom problem in 1866 is an index to his character and a partial explanation of how he came to discover the stone boundary marker of the northeast corner of the survey of the Beverley Manor Grant in Augusta County.

One August morning in 1736 a part of men with surveying instruments stood on the point of land formed by the junction of Christian's Creek and Long Meadow Run (called then Beaver Run) just above their confluence with Middle River preparing to embark on a very ambitious project. It was composed of those gentlemen to whom William Gooch, the Colonial Governor, in the name of King George II, was soon to grant ownership of a tremendous tract of land of 118,491 acres "situated beyond the Great Mountains", and right across the center of what was to be Augusta County. They were William Beverley, of Essex, Sir John Randolph, of Williamsburg, Richard Randolph, of Henrico, and John Robinson, of King and Queen, with their surveyor Thomas Lewis, son of John Lewis of "Bellefonte", and his helpers. They set up a small stone marker and began their task of surveying the boundaries of the area to be known as Beverley Manor. The original copy of this immense grant, dated August 12th, 1736, and signed on September 6th by William Gooch, is in the



Corner Stone Marker of Augusta County in Front of County Court House

collection of Virginia State Historical Society in Richmond. There is an attested copy of it in Deed Book 86, page 542, in the Augusta County Courthouse.¹ On September 17th the three other grantees released their title and claim to it to William Beverley.² The meticulous description of the first day's survey is characteristic of the whole of it.

"Beginning at five white oaks on a narrow point between a large Run called Christy Creek and a small Run called Beaver Run, about twenty poles on the east side the Middle River Sherando and running thence with seventy degrees west three hundred and sixty four poles by four pines nigh the said River thence north fifteen degrees west one hundred and twenty five poles by a large white oak and two small ones, thence north seventy five degrees east two hundred and ninety seven poles to four pines and a red oak on a ridge thence north fifteen degrees east forty four poles, to a double walnut and elm on the edge of Middle River thence down the same one hundred and two poles to a red oak and hickory by the River side."

They marked this point by carving upon a slab of rough brown sandstone their symbol, a small circle enclosing a cross, and then returned to their hospitable lodging of the night before at the home of pioneer settler James Kerr, adjacent to their starting point. Next day they set out in the opposite direction, to eventually complete the round, weeks later, at the stone they had placed by Middle River. It was this marker, long since covered by earth, which came to light two hundred and seventy two years later in 1908, when William McCue entered the story.

Time had passed and the Washington College student had become a useful and successful citizen and farmer in his native county, having fallen heir to a part of the estate of his father Thomas McCue, "Belvidere." His grandmother was Ann Barry of Staunton, who married Dr. William McCue, a young physician. His untimely death left her a widow of twenty one years with two sons. Later marrying John Allen of Augusta County, she was to give her name to Ann Arbor, Michigan, as related in the fascinating story recorded by Mrs. Gladys B. Clem in her book, "It Happened Around Staunton In Virginia."³ William McCue's great grandfather was the distinguished pastor of Tinkling Spring Church for twenty seven years, the Reverend John McCue, who had an active part in the organization of the Presbyterian Churches of both Staunton and Waynesboro.

William McCue's training in engineering and friendly discussions with a neighbor, John Sites, about the accuracy of existing fence lines on their adjoining properties led to his desire to determine the actual nearby line of the Beverley Manor survey of 1736. His daughter Mabel relates today of how diligently her father worked with his customary passion for accuracy for at least a year in the prosecution of this plan. "My father was a very exact workman," says Miss Mabel McCue. "With him, as he often said, 'It had to be right.' " And so having finally decided to his satisfaction where the then missing stone should be by Middle River, which had been placed at the end of the first day's surveying by the William Beverley party, he marked the spot. Then one day in the early spring of 1908 he called in John May of Mount Sidney, a capable and diligent laborer, to search for it. He laid out cross lines for some ten or fifteen feet in four directions from his central mark, and set his helper to work. Mr. Russell Miller, whose home is now nearby, and who as a small lad was an interested observer of what was going on, tells us that John May had been digging only in his first trench when he came upon a large piece of sandstone approximately thirty five inches long, fifteen wide, and five inches thick, which bore a definite mark upon it, a circle with a cross within it. Greatly excited by his discovery, he went in haste to tell his friend John Phillips, who operated a small general store at the adjacent community of Knightly. And then, being the bearer of good news, the three miles to the home of Mr. McCue seemed to him but one. Upon being told that Mr. McCue was at the barn, he ran out there and called loudly, "Mr. McCue, I've found the stone!" And together they hastened back to the bank of Middle River, where to William McCue's delight there was the stone he had sought so well.

This historic discovery was a real satisfaction to a painstaking workman, but strangely enough the news did not seem to find recognition in the public press, for nothing can be found about it in the pages of the Staunton Spectator, the weekly newspaper of 1908, though its "Personals" columns have much of lesser interest. But such news cannot be restrained, and many who were interested in their county's history took note of it with real appreciation.

Mr. McCue, feeling that something should be done with this ancient landmark to make it more accessible to many, finally in April 1912 wrote a letter to those he thought might be most

concerned, the members of the Beverley Manor Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, through their Historian, Mrs. John A. Alexander. His confidence was not misplaced, for when Mrs. Alexander read his letter to the chapter it met with an immediate response. They voted on April 9th, 1912, to seek the permission of the Board of Supervisors of Augusta County to move the boundary stone to the Courthouse.⁴ This permission was readily granted by the Board then headed by Captain Thomas M. Smiley, and an appropriation of \$50.00 was made to the Chapter to effect the work of removal.⁵ Months passed, with several subsequent references to it in the minutes of the Chapter, but finally the stone was set up in the Courthouse, along with a marble tablet descriptive of it. They were unveiled with appropriate ceremonies in May of 1913 under the leadership of Mrs. Jennie McCue Marshall (Mrs. W. C.) who was then the Beverley Manor Chapter Regent.⁶ The tablet bore the inscription:

CORNER-STONE
of the
BEVERLEY MANOR GRANT
PLANTED AT END OF FIRST DAYS
SURVEYING DONE IN AUGUSTA
COUNTY IT MARKED THE
NORTH-EAST CORNER OF A
TRACT OF 118,491 ACRES
GRANTED by GOVERNOR
GOOCH to WILLIAM
BEVERLEY
SEPTEMBER 6, 1736
DISCOVERED in 1908 by
WILLIAM McCUE
Erected by County Board of
Supervisors and Beverley
Manor Chapter D.A.R.
1913

According to the recollection of several authorities consulted, the stone seems to have been in more than one location in the Courthouse in succeeding years. The present Clerk of Court, Mr. Rudolph L. Shaver, is of the opinion that it was when certain

renovations were made in the building that the stone with its accompanying tablet were placed at the foot of the flagpole in front of the portico of the Courthouse, about the year 1948.

At the spot on the riverbank where the stone was originally found, Mr. McCue erected a small stone marker set on a concrete foundation.⁷ This stone bears on one side the same symbol found on the original, the cross enclosed by a circle, and on the other the capital letter "B" and three vertical marks, "III." This marker has in late years become separated from its base and removed a few yards away. The concrete base has subsequently become covered with earth washed down from the nearby ravine in the steep hills bordering the river at this point. It has not been located as of this writing, but the effort will be made to find it, and the stone replaced.

The Beverley survey boundary stone, one of our oldest relics of Colonial days, is now on display to all passers by, though one might surmise that only a fraction of the population of Staunton and our County knows that it is there. Furthermore, although it was treated with preservatives when first placed outside, it seems to be in real danger of dissolution from erosion, if not from vandalism. Close examination reveals a multitude of small cracks which render it vulnerable to the extremes of weather. It is too historic and precious a relic to be allowed to be thus endangered. William McCue rendered a distinct service to Augusta County in his calculated discovery of this corner-stone of the past, and it is our responsibility and privilege to preserve it for future generations of Augustans.

References

1. The certified copy from which this was made is in File Box 18, Circuit Court, Chancery Suit, Beverley vs. Kinney, Augusta Co. Courthouse.
2. See copy of this release in same File Box 18, Beverley vs. Kinney.
3. cf pp. 35-37.
4. cf Minutes, Beverley Manor Chapter D.A.R. April 9, 1912. Archives of Augusta Co. Historical Society.
5. cf Minutes, op. cit., May 9, 1912 and Nov. 9, 1912.
6. cf Minutes, op. cit., June 7, 1913.
7. cf Minutes, Beverley Manor Chapter D.A.R. October 30, 1912.

OLD TIME LIFE IN AUGUSTA COUNTY

(Editor's note: A reprint from March 11, 1887 issue of Staunton Vindicator in News-Virginian of December 10, 1969 made available by Mrs. Frank Harnsberger, 796 Ashby Drive, Waynesboro.)

Over the rolling country north of Waynesboro, as I drove along one of its roads Friday morning, hung a heavy cold fog just bordering on a snow fall. On the sharp edge of the fence tops there was a thin skim of ice, and the slender ends of the bush tops were tipped with it.

Pointing across a little field my companion said, "There is the graveyard of the old settlers. Most all of the early comers to this neighborhood were buried there."

It was an oblong enclosure of rough stones, the wall hardly two feet tall, and inside the weeds hid all appearance of graves.

It was a rough resting place, but it was grimly in keeping with the rough, hardy lives those who laid there had led; and it was as unlike the modern graveyards of today as the handsome brick mansions which dot the vicinity, and in which the descendants of the old settlers live, are unlike the pole cabins in which the forefathers spent their rough, toilsome, honest lives.

I was on my way to interview the son of one of those settlers and one who had reached an age sufficient to entitle him to be called one of the old settlers himself. It was Simon Coiner.

I was on my way to see the oldest man of that name in Virginia and, as far as known, in this country. He is the only surviving son of the pioneer Caspar Coiner who came from Carlisle, Penn., a century ago, and died in 1855 at the good old age of 92 years.

He and his sister, Mrs. Dr. Godfrey Henkel of Newmarket, are the only children now living out of the twelve that the pioneer had.

Caspar Coiner was twenty-two years old when he settled on the farm to which I was going, and lived for seventy years on the same spot of ground that he first bought, and his son Simon has lived there for eighty-two years.



Waynesboro

The Old and the New

As I alighted in front of a handsome modern brick mansion with handsome verandahs, my companion pointed out to me some of the vestiges of the past that occupied the outlying ground near it.

There was the old loom house that the weaving used to be done in; near it was the house where the hemp used to be broken, and alongside of it was the old still that was run every year for sixty years.

And inside of the house I found something more modern still, a four-months- old little Caspar Coiner, a grandson of Simon Coiner, who was born on the centennial of the arrival of the original Caspar Coiner in Augusta and was named after him in honor of the event.

If the old and rough times were hard on the young, it gave them the inestimable boon of lasting health. The man of eighty-two who stepped up lightly to greet me appeared to me as fine and tough as a man of fifty. His hair was white, his figure erect, his voice was strong, his handshake firm, and his eyes as clear and bright as a child's. His deafness is the only handicap which this interviewer can discover in him.

It was well, as I learned afterwards, that I had come on a bad day, for had it been clear, he would have been out in a field nearby blasting rock!

There is not a clear day in the year, except Sunday, that he does not insist upon being at some kind of work.

He very kindly consented to tell me about the pioneer life of his father and himself—for in his childhood it was pretty much the same sort of life his father first entered on in this country—and seated before a rousing wood fire I jotted it down as he went along.

I will let him tell his own story in his own way.

Settling in the County

"It was more than a hundred years ago that my father Caspar Coiner came to this county. He settled on this very place.

"Old James Gillespie lived on it then, and he was about going to Tennessee when my father took the place from him. Gillespie made a sale of his things and the work harness was made of rope. My father didn't want to buy any of the old plunder and went off and staid away all day to keep from it,

but the old man left an old cupboard in the house which my father found when he came back and so he had to buy it.

"The house was of logs with an eight foot chimney and I remember it well. My father boarded then with Daniel Vance, a blacksmith, near here.

"I remember the country well as a boy. It was a brush country—there was no timber. There were no wagons and all hauling was done on sleds. There was no church anywhere near here and the first that was built in the vicinity was the Koiner church near Koiner's Store.

"When my father had put in his first crop of grain he went back to Carlisle. Before he got there he met Martin Bush who was moving. He told him about Virginia, and Bush came here and went on the place where Geo. K. Keiser now lives.

"There were no mills in the county in that day, only a pair of burrs on Christian's Creek where they made a little flour. The first load of flour ever sent from the county to Richmond my father took there.

"After Martin Bush made a little money he bought the place where Cary Smith now lives. He bought it with two little loads of flour that he sent to Richmond, and it cost him 4s 6d (75 cents), an acre. The timber was so scarce that all the neighbors got together and went to a man named Leckey who lived near here and had some on his place, to get his permission to cut some poles to make houses of. Our fences were made of brush.

The Augusta Coiners

"My father had twelve children—nine sons and three daughters. They all settled around Waynesboro. The other Coiners were descendants of Caspar's brothers, but most of them went West. Caspar's brother George settled on the next farm to his. The first Coiner, Michael, the father of Caspar, came from Germany eighteen years before the Revolution, and Peter Hanger came with him. Hanger settled in Staunton where Paul Henkel, Peck, and other Germans were already living.

"One of the neighbors here was John Reese, a Hessian, who was captured at Trenton, by Gen. Washington. His General, Rawls, was killed in that fight. Reese was made prisoner and carried to Carlisle and after a few months was exchanged and put on a ship with 400 other prisoners to go back to England.

"The ship was caught in a storm and was driven into Norfolk. The prisoners dispersed there and Reese came to this side of the Blue Ridge. His farm adjoined where Marion Leonard now lives.

"Another neighbor was George Leonard, who came from Pennsylvania and bought the Leckey place. He raised a large family and all of that name in this county now are of that family. George Leonard was a weaver and was a Revolutionary soldier and used to tell about the fights his cavalry company had with General Tarleton in South Carolina.

"The Alexanders lived where the Browers now live, and the Turks, Patricks, Dalhouses, McCunes, McClures, Finleys and Ramsays were living in this vicinity.

Even in That Day

"Even in that day the people used to talk about where settlers came from.

"One night my father went over to Ramsay's mill, and on the way the dog treed something. It was a cold night and he took off his overcoat and climbed the tree and shook it down. It struck on the overcoat. It was not a possum, it was a polecat. The coat was dreadful, but it was so cold that he had to put it on.

"When he got to the mill old Ramsay raised a great row over the coat and said, 'When these Pennsylvanians come down here, even the polecats get after them.'"

The Land Where Waynesboro Stands

"Conrad Coiner, Caspar's brother, came down from Pennsylvania to visit him, and my father took him around to show him the country. He showed him the five hundred acres where Waynesboro now stands, which he could buy for 2s 6d (37½ cents an acre).

"Conrad looked over it and as he was coming back home said to my father. 'Caspar, as I was coming down here I saw three wild turkeys run across the road at Woodstock. I wouldn't give those turkeys for the whole five hundred acres.'

"Some of this land (the Bush land) sold a year or two ago at \$80 an acre. When a settlement was first commenced at Waynesboro, the Widow Teese first kept a tavern there. Some years after that, old Tom Wilson kept it. He died about 1818.

"Caspar Coiner built the first brick house that was built there and it is standing now. George Baylor once lived in it and afterwards Judge Greiner. It was built in 1806.

"Most of the people who died in this country in those old days were buried in Ramsay's graveyard, which is now the Pelter farm."

The Early Living

How about the house-raising in those old days?

"Well, there weren't any house-raising worth calling that. There were no logs to raise them with—nothing but poles. Old man Ramsay had a house raising but the poles were so small that they would swag in the middle.

"The people mostly those times lived on buttermilk and hominy. There were no mills to grind the corn fine. The country was so bare of timber that a boy sent out to hunt cattle could climb a tree and see all around the country and that way find his cattle.

"The Barren Ridge road was built so that the Indians who traveled up and down the Valley might take that road and not branch off down into the farms.

"The people got their salt from Richmond by trading butter for it. The neighbors would make a keg of butter each and put it all together and send it over the Blue Ridge to Richmond to trade for salt.

"At the foot of the mountain this side it would be put on pack saddles and carried over on horses, and on the other side would be put in carts. The drivers took no feed with them but would hobble their horses when they stopped, and graze them.

"There was a place called "Scuffletown," just outside of Richmond, where the drivers of the carts would have frolics.

The War of 1812

"When the war of 1812 came, there was a great stir. I remember my brother Mike went in the New Hope company.

"When the British came to the Blue Ridge, Hall's Regiment went to the gap with guns and pitchforks. They made imitations of cannon out of trees and planted them in the gap to fool the British.

The Professions and Trades

"There were no doctors around here in those days and no stores, but there were mechanics. At Waynesboro, Taylor was the shoemaker, Paul Apple was the saddler, and Silver and

Grooms were the tailors. They used to come out to the farms to cut and make the clothes. On the farms we used to make cloth as thick as sole leather and full it—a pair of pants of it would last for two years. The tailors used to come to the houses and make them.

"The same way with shoes—every farmer had a tanning pit and made his own leather and the shoemakers would come to the house and make the shoes. The blacksmiths made their own nails. The tires of wheels used to be put on in pieces.

"When the news came to the neighborhood that there was a blacksmith down here in Rockingham who could put on a tire whole, hot, the people could not believe it and refused to try it because the hot tire would burn the wheel up. After a while they got to forcing the tire on cold.

"My father used to strike for a week for a blacksmith in making one tire.

"To make the mould-board for plows the farmers would hunt out twisted logs. The first iron mould-board that ever came here was in 1815. Coalter had them at his grocery in Waynesboro and my father sent me there to get one.

"Every farmer had his still in those days and there was more liquor and fewer drunkards than there are now. After the war of 1812 my father paid a government tax of 25 cents per gallon. It was collected by Mike Garber and my father paid \$400 tax.

"I have stilled for sixty-one years.

"In those days Tennessee was 'far west' and young Jimmy Gillespie who came back from there on a visit, used to tell great stories about the Indians there.

"The country here was improving fast even in that day, and Jimmy expressed surprise at the great changes since he had been away.

The Wolves

"The game around here was plentiful and so were the wolves. The wolves would attack the sheep and carry them off in the day time. My father had two boys to watch the sheep, and one morning when they started to breakfast, before they had gotten to the house, the flock came running after them: the wolves had caught and carried off one in that little while.

"We made pits to catch the wolves in, but though we caught many a dog, we got no wolves. Many a time has my mother

pointed me to those rocks over there (pointing out of the window) to look at the wolves standing there howling in the day time. The sheep were then out here in the yard.

"The land around here was part of the Beverley grant. The settlers would get it surveyed and send Beverley the plat and he would give them the title to it at 75 cents an acre. The settlers would pick out the land in the drafts.

How Children were Raised

"They raised children in those days to be tough. To this day I have never had a spell of sickness nor taken a single dose of medicine from a doctor.

"We children—there were twelve of us—were dressed in long tow shirts. We never got shoes until we were able to do some sort of work—not even in winter. I didn't get shoes until I was able to find after the cradle in the field.

"We boys didn't get a hat till we were ten years old. When we were sick they would give us some sage tea. Though there were twelve of us, my father never had a doctor but once in his life for his whole family.

"We children didn't sit at the table with the grown ones. When the time came for our supper the colored woman would take off the fire a big pot of mush and ladle out our share in pewter dishes with milk in it.

"There was no coffee—coffee in those times was for sick people or for very old people. At dinner we had meat, cabbage, milk and vegetables.

"I was sent to school at eight years of age. The school was near the Hermitage. In it they taught German, and there I learned to read this—and Mr. Coiner took up one of Martin Luther's Bibles in German.

"The school was on Elk Run and two or three streams, branches of that run, that were fed by fine springs in that day, are now entirely dry and the ground for many years has been plowed over.

"My father, Caspar Coiner, had twelve children, seventy-six grand children and thirty-five great-grand children when he died. The raising we got made us hardy enough, and I can remember one year that I worked out of doors every working day in that year, winter and summer."

Conclusion

After my interview, of which I have given a fairly full sketch above, was over, I took dinner with the family, which consisted of the old gentleman, his son Philip Melanchthon Coiner; the wife of the latter, formerly a Miss Lincoln of Rockingham and a member of the family from which President Lincoln came, and Martin Luther Leonard of Waynesboro, a relative of the Coiner family, who was my companion on my drive.

When I bade the old man farewell, I told him that I had to come again when he celebrated one hundred years and interview him then.

Letting out a hearty laugh, he said that if he was well then that I might come.

Perhaps I should not close this interview without referring to "Old Harry," a colored man who has been with Mr. Coiner for fifty-eight years and who goes out with him now into the fields whenever he goes. He is as much a fixture on the premises as the veteran himself.

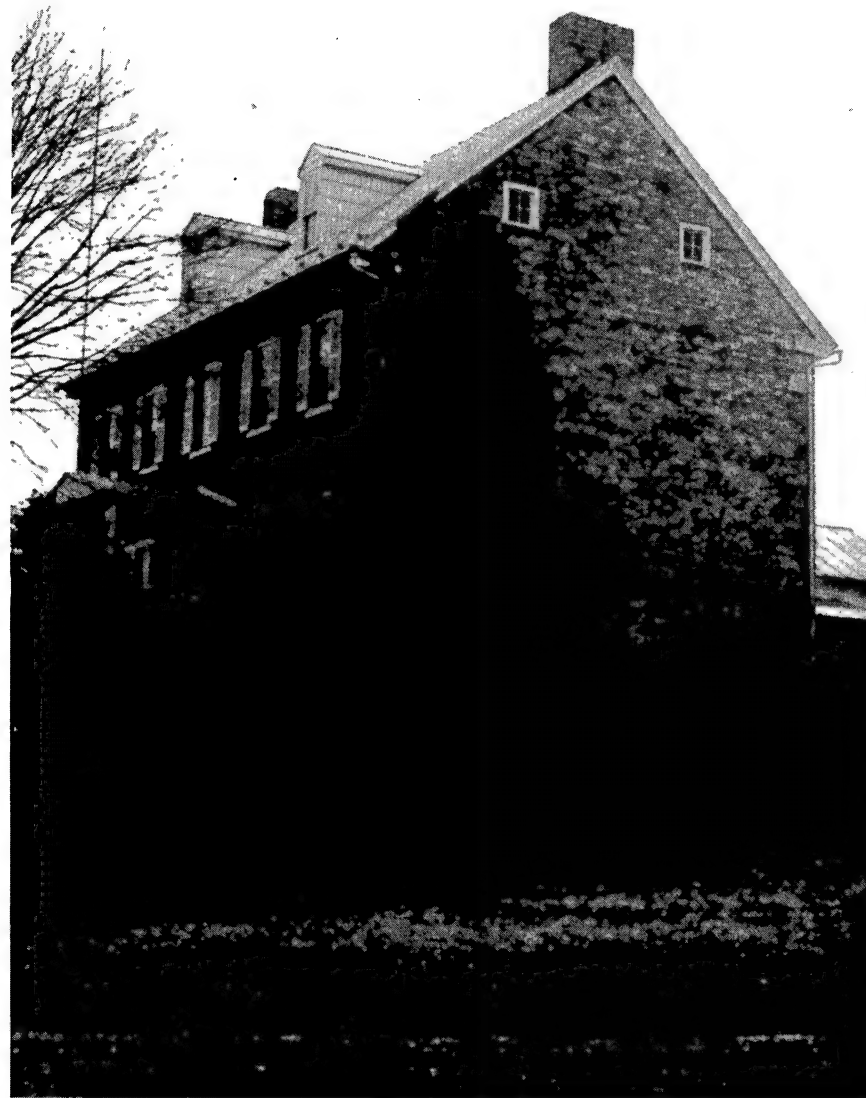
The veteran farmer is today one, and the oldest one of, I think, three hundred Coiners in Augusta County, and all of kin, whether the name is spelled Coiner, Coyner, or Koiner.

It is a family that has spread from a little settler's cabin near Ramsay's graveyard to almost every part of the county and has made the land blossom into thrifty, well kept farms.

They are a remarkable people in the way of thrift and I was once told (though I now forget the figures) of the number of farms in the South River District that are owned by Coiners, and the number is larger than those held by any fifty other names put together.

The names of those I gave you at dinner table with me will inform you that the bearers were Lutherans.

Nearly all of the names previously given and kin are Lutherans and orthodox in the severest sense of the word. In this county the bearers of the family name have been legislators, county officers, preachers, soldiers, farmers, business men—everything that a good citizen may be and conducted themselves well therein.



Gray Gables Home of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Krewatch

Fourth of a Series

OLD HOMES OF AUGUSTA COUNTY

“GRAY GABLES”

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Krewatch

by Gladys B. Clem

For nearly 200 years Gray Gables has faced the rising sun from its gentle slope in the western section of Augusta County.

Its wide acres are reached from Va. 708 by a winding lane that leads through broad meadows and across a narrow stream. One is impressed with the simple dignity of its unbroken lines that have been changed so little by time and use.

Now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Krewatch, it was originally built for James Brown, who, it is said, employed Hessian labor for its construction. He probably counted himself fortunate in securing these skilled masons and mechanics to do his building.

As German mercenary troops, they had been brought to this country by Britain to help subdue her rebellious American colonies. Many were taken prisoner and several hundred were quartered in Virginia under General Daniel Morgan. Unable to make themselves understood and fighting a war in which they had little interest, they became acutely homesick. Morgan, shrewdly sized up this labor potential and put them to work, it is said.

As a reminder of the legacy of this era of America's history, a few of these stone “block houses” built by the Hessian prisoners, can be found in the Valley today. Four or five being listed in Augusta County.

Following a similar design, these dwellings were usually constructed with two rooms on the first floor, two above, a basement and attic. With characteristic resourcefulness, these German artisans used the materials at hand—limestone cut from outcroppings and gathered from the fields when turned over by the plowshares, plaster being made from mud, ground limestone and animal hair. Native lumber supplied the needed wood.

The walls of Gray Gables measure 22 inches in thickness and the window panes are marked with that opalescent sheen that denotes hand made glass. The wide floor boards were made smooth with ax and plane. Those in the attic still present their unfinished roughness.

The everyday living in most colonial homes took place in the basement, where the wide fireplace could be used for both cooking and warmth. The second, or adjoining room, was usually the dining room. The hand cast kettles, pots, hooks and other implements used in fireplace cooking, clearly indicate it was no easy job for the housewife. Only when it was bedtime, were the candles lit and the family retired up the narrow stairway to the sleeping quarters on the second floor.

Handsome chair rails feature the first floor rooms, a real necessity that guarded the plaster from being broken by those who insisted in tipping their chairs against the wall.

Practically all dwellings, credited to Hessian labor, are characterized by the chimneys being built within the house walls, unlike the English who designed theirs on the outside. Many fireplaces are placed across the *corners* of adjoining rooms and thus one chimney serves two rooms.

Recently when one fireplace at Gray Gables was being restored to its original lines, two other fireplaces of smaller measurements were found to have been built in front of the original. Limestone blocks, cut to the preciseness of bricks, formed the arch of this larger fireplace that could accommodate 4 foot logs.

During the Civil War, when the Federals were foraging around in the Valley, practically everyone buried their silverware and other valuables for safe keeping. Among the items hidden at Gray Gables was a set of coin silver spoons, belonging to one of the Brown descendants, Sallie Anderson. After hostilities ceased the silver was brought from its hiding place. But one spoon was missing. Almost a century later, while making some structural changes, it became necessary to remove a quantity of red clay filing from behind a basement chimney. Buried in the clay was the missing spoon! It was passed to the appreciative ownership of Mrs. William L. Gardner, of Staunton, a great-granddaughter of Sallie Anderson.

Throughout the short winter days, when the meadows are blanketed in snow and the creek is fringed with ice, the sun shines cheerfully through Gray Gables' south windows. It brings out the satiny patina of old furniture and the warm glow of brass and copper and gives emphasis to the fragrance of burning logs in the wide fireplace. Throughout the old home and its furnishings one senses the deep appreciation of its present owners to those homesick Hessian mercenaries who builded so well so long ago.

Augusta County Court Proceedings OVER 200 YEARS AGO

Charles Boddy fined for peddling without a license.

* * * *

John Caldwell has leave to build an *Oil* mill on his land on South River.

* * * *

John Frogg to be paid for repairing the jail and building the ducking stool.

* * * *

The old court house in which Alexander St. Clair lives now to be leased for five years.

* * * *

It appears that Archer Matthews is no longer capable of instructing his apprentice, Robert Shaw, as an apprentice and that James Shaw, Robert's father is incapable of bringing him up in a Christian like manner, is to be bound to John Frogg, to learn the same trade.

* * * *

August 21, 1770

John Bear and George Spear naturalized.

* * * *

Commonwealth vs. George Brown—infant. Indictment for throwing stones and putting out eye of William Alexander.

* * * *

Thomas Wilson kept the Red House Tavern on main road between Lexington and Staunton.

* * * *

In 1770 Samuel Lammie settled on Cove Creek and lived there until 1774 when he was taken by the Indians.

* * * *

AUGUSTA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY — 1969-1970

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Staunton, Va. 24401

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321 Sherwood Ave.
Staunton, Va. 24401

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612 W. Main St.
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Afton, Va. 22920

Dr. Marshall Moore Brice
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Stuarts Draft, Va. 24477

Miss Pinkie A. Brown
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Staunton, Va. 24401

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Star Route 2
La Pine, Oregon 97739

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Hubert C. Christian
1402 N. Moore Rd.
Chattanooga, Tenn. 37411

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419 Thornrose Ave.
Staunton, Va. 24401

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656 Cherry Ave.
Waynesboro, Va. 22980

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Waynesboro, Va. 22980

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Staunton, Va. 24401

Fletcher Collins, Jr.
"The Oaks", 437 E. Beverley St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Edwin F. Conger
"Breezy Hill"
1220 N. Augusta St., Box 149
Staunton, Va. 24401

William A. Crawford
316 College Circle
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mrs. Joseph B. Cross
7706 Buena Vista
Houston, Tex. 77017

Mrs. Ruth Rodes Culpepper
536 Chestnut Ave.
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Fitzhugh Elder, Jr.
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110 Country Club Place
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San Marino, Cal. 91108

Mrs. John Lewis Gibbs
120 College Circle
Staunton, Va. 24401

Miss Nannie Lewis Gibbs
207 College Circle
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mrs. A. Crawford Gilkeson
Rt. 1, Box 218
Fishersville, Va. 22939

J. Paul Glick, Sr.
360 Maple Ave.
Waynesboro, Va. 22980

Mrs. N. H. Gowing
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Waynesboro, Va. 22980

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Box 147
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Box 4
Bridgewater, Va. 22812

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120 Church St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

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Waynesboro, Va. 22980

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Staunton, Va. 24401

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Staunton, Va. 24401

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1220 N. Augusta St., Box 149
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637 Locust Ave.
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Mr. & Mrs. J. Harold Kivlighan
44 Orchard Rd.
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Staunton, Va. 24401

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Staunton, Va. 24401

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Staunton, Va. 24401

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Dr. & Mrs. Karl F. Menk
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Staunton, Va. 24401

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William Stuart Moffett, Jr.
1222 N. Augusta St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Wallace M. Montgomery
772 Opie St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. William Whiting Moore
60 Ridgeview Rd.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph S. Moyer
814 Jefferson Ave., Box 693
Waynesboro, Va. 22980

Mr. & Mrs. Anthony J. Muzzy
Mr. Larry Muzzy
353 Sherwood Ave.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Harry L. Nash, Jr.
Hermitage Road, Box 174
Waynesboro, Va. 22980

Gen. & Mrs. E. Walton Opie
203 N. Coalter St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Allan B. Painter
52 Oak Lane
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Edward L. Parker
Box 398
Craigsville, Va. 24430

Prof. & Mrs. James E. Patrick
"Braeburn", 727 E. Beverley St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

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"Fancy Hill", 1500 Dogwood Rd.
Staunton, Va. 24401

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Robertson, Jr.
Ridgeview Rd.
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36 Ridgeview Rd.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Sidney B. Shultz
403 Hillary St.
New Orleans, La. 70118

Mrs. A. Gilkeson Simpkins & Family
Box 218, Rt. 1
Fishersville, Va. 22939

Dr. & Mrs. McKelden Smith
3001 N. Augusta St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

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"Locust Grove"
Middlebrook, Va. 24459

Dr. & Mrs. James Sprunt
111 Rose Hill Circle
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Robert B. Taylor
302 E. Beverley St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Fred D. Thacker
129 College Circle
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Owen Thomas III
Route 2, Box 335
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Stephen D. Timberlake
172 N. Coalter St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Dr. & Mrs. H. St. George Tucker
4123 Kingcrest Parkway
Richmond, Va. 23221

Dr. & Mrs. Herbert S. Turner
315 N. Coalter St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Dr. & Mrs. Howard M. Wilson
114 Boddington Rd.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Col. & Mrs. Herman Work
200 N. Market St.
Staunton, Va. 24401

Mr. & Mrs. Layton W. Yancey
915 Selma Boulevard
Staunton, Va. 24401

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